

# ARE YOU UNDER THE INFLUENCE?

## Application; Thinking

### Purpose:

To encourage students to use critical thinking skills to identify advertising strategies used to influence youth.

### Equipment Included in Kit:

Laminated logo cards (McDonald's, Under Armour, Apple, Roxy, Red Bull) or online at end of file DVD - *Are You Under the Influence*-Individual ad/PSA collection or online at <https://vimeo.com/144138981>.

### Teacher to Provide:

- Computer and projector
- Wall/screen to display video/darkened room.

**Student Homework:** included.

### Brief Description:

This learning centre explores the various techniques and marketing strategies used by the media to influence young people's choices. This learning centre uses a video and guided discussion to educate and provide students with the skills to become critical thinkers - able to interpret, cope with and understand the media messages they are exposed to directly and indirectly.

*PLEASE NOTE: The Ads/PSAs (Public Service Announcements) have been selected specifically to represent a variety of strategies, and permission has been granted to use them.*

### Activity 1:

- Hold up one laminated logo card at a time.
- Ask students to identify the company/brand name, what product it sells and the company slogan (if there is one).
- Explain that this is a great marketing that students know all of this by looking at only a symbol.

### Activity 2:

- Using the Media Influence Speaker's Notes, discuss the definitions of advertising, Ad vs. PSA, media literacy and advertising goals.



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## Activity 3:

- Explain that marketing companies use many strategies to accomplish these goals.
- Hand out the "Marketing Strategies" worksheet; briefly review the strategies that are listed. Students can complete the chart using examples from the discussion.
- Play Are You Under the Influence, stopping after each Ad or PSA and discuss:
  - Is this an Ad or PSA?
  - Who is the target audience?
  - What is the message?
  - What marketing strategy(s) is being used?

## Activity 4:

Show students the final ad - 'Old Milwaukee - A Girl With Every Can' and ask them to critique it as they have been doing.

- **Ask** Students: *What do you think about this ad?*  
*Answer:* promotes the relationship between alcohol and sexual prowess.
  - drinking this beer will 'get" you a girl
  - strong relationship between sexual assault and alcohol
  - portrays women as something to be owned.
- **Explain:** Local communities and individuals became upset when Old Milwaukee came out with this campaign in 2011. They set up a Facebook page, provided information, an online petition was created and this ad was banned.
- **Ask** Students: *How can you respond to media manipulations in advertising?*  
*Answer:* Don't buy the product.
  - Don't attend events sponsored by the company
  - Email/write/call to complain to Advertising Standards Canada.

The important thing is to emphasize that students do **not** have to allow themselves to be influenced, nor are they without the power to respond.

## Activity 5:

Divide the students into small groups and have them reflect on and answer the following questions. Then have groups report back to the whole class. (students will need to choose a recorder and a spokesperson).

1. Do you feel advertising companies specifically target youth? Explain.
2. Do you feel advertising influences your younger siblings/friends? Do you feel advertising influences you? Explain.
3. How do companies promote their products?
4. What are some of the other things that can influence someone to:
  - behave a certain way?
  - buy a specific product?
  - try alcohol/drugs?
  - participate in risky behaviour?



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## Media Influence Speaker's Notes

*Advertising* is defined as any message with content controlled by an advertiser that is communicated to influence the choice, opinions or behaviours. Advertising messages are used to promote the use of goods and services, to improve the public image of corporations, organizations and governments, or to advance a point of view.

**Ask** students the following questions:

- Why is advertising to young people so important?

*Answer:* To start a lifetime of purchasing (\$\$\$) and to build brand loyalty. Companies/businesses spend billions of dollars every year on advertising. The advertising business hires the brightest, most creative people they can find to create the most memorable, powerful, convincing ads.

- What annual event on TV has the most expensive ad time?

*Answer:* Superbowl.

- How much does a 30 second ad cost during the Superbowl?

*Answer:* in 2018, a 30 second ad cost \$5 million.

- Why would any company pay this kind of money?

*Answer:* because they are guaranteed millions of viewers around the world...which doesn't happen often.

*Advertisement or commercial* is a promotion of a product or service for monetary gain or profit through one of several forms of media.

**Ask** students: Can you name the different forms of media that carry ads?

*Answer:* radio, TV internet ads, text messages, billboards, benches, vehicles, floors, receipts, posters, flyers, etc.

A *Public Service Announcement (PSA)* is a not-for-profit advertisement typically on radio or television, designed to change public attitudes by raising awareness about specific issues.

**Ask** students: What do I mean when I say someone is literate?

*Answer:* They can read and write.

*Media Literacy* is the ability to interpret the images we see in the media, and decide if it is propaganda (not all true) or factual. I.e. on TV, in print (magazines, newspapers), on billboards, on the radio, on the internet, etc. These images shape our attitudes and choices. The only goal of the advertiser is to persuade a target market to do something...buy a specific product, go somewhere, vote a certain way. Companies advertise:

1. To make their products more visible.
2. To attract new customers.
3. To maintain established customers and encourage them to remain "loyal" to the brand.
4. To influence people who normally buy a competitor's brand to switch to the advertiser's brand.
5. Ultimately, to increase sales.



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## Marketing Strategies – Teacher Answer Sheet

This list describes the most common strategies used for persuasion in advertising. Fill in the chart as you watch and discuss the ads/PSAs.

Marketing Strategy	Definition	Examples of Ads or PSAs
Testimonial or Endorsement	An important or well-known person/role model claims that they use the product. This implies that the product is worthwhile. Someone tells a true story.	The Rant – Joe Canadian-Beer (Ad) Robin Williams – Snickers (Ad) Never – drinking and driving (Australia) (PSA) Stoned Drivers are Killers (PSA)
Sex Appeal or Ego	The product is associated somehow with sex or sexuality – bikinis, big breasts, 6-pack abs, flirting, etc. Often the visuals have nothing to do with the product. It may be implied that a person may become more appealing or sexy by using the product.	Street Luge – Beer (Ad) Truth Initiative Links (x 2): <a href="#">Sex Appeal</a> and <a href="#">Stylist/Ego</a>
Having Fun	People in the ad are having a really good time as part of the 'gang'. The hidden message: "Use the product and you'll have fun as well."	500 Miles – Beer (Ad) The Contest – Beer (Ad)
Manipulation	The ad suggests manipulative, exaggerated or untruthful messages.	Sketchers and cheetah (Ad) Robin Williams – Snickers (Ad) Red Bull gives you wings (Ad) Truth Initiative Link: <a href="#">If Advertising were Honest.</a>
Humour	The ad uses comedic characters, dialogue or pictures to promote the product.	Street Luge – Beer (Ad) Robin Williams – Snickers (Ad) Red Bull gives you wings (Ad)
Contests, Special Promotions	The ad features a contest/special promotion in relation to a product (e.g., holiday to Florida, back stage passes to a music concert, C.D.'s in beer cases). Viewers may feel compelled to buy this product in order to win the contest or get their "free" promotional item.	Red Bull do you have what it takes? (Ad)
Statistics	The ad uses numbers to impress the consumer. These ads do not provide any information about the source of the statistics.	Body Bags – Tobacco (PSA) Know What's In Your Mouth (PSA) Smoking vs. Chew (PSA) Stoned Drivers are Killers (PSA)
Health Appeal	The ad suggests that the product can do wonders for the consumer's health. The ad uses expressions like "the best" and "the only" that are not substantiated.	Ab Circle Pro
Reverse/Sarcasm	The ad leads you along one line of thinking, and then flips at the end.	Despicable – Airplane (PSA) Feeling Alright – Alcohol (PSA) Truth – Secrets of a tobacco executive (PSA) Smoking Kid (PSA) <a href="#">Truth Initiative: Safer does not = safe</a>



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## Order of PSAs and Ads – Individual DVD

- The Contest – Beer (ad, having fun)
- Body Bag – Tobacco (psa, statistics)
- Street Luge – Beer (ad, sex appeal, humour)
- The Rant – Joe Canadian – Beer (ad, endorsement)
- Feeling Alright – Alcohol (psa, reverse)
- Chew print – billiards (ad, sex appeal, manipulation)
- Robin Williams – Snickers (ad, endorsement, humour, manipulation)
- Know What's In Your Mouth – Chew tobacco (psa, sarcasm, statistics)
- 500 Miles – Beer (ad, having fun)
- Red Bull Gives You Wings Energy Drink (ad, manipulation, humour)
- Despicable – Airplane (psa, reverse)
- Chew print – Copenhagen cyclist (ad, sex appeal/ego, manipulation)
- Red Bull First Person – Do You Have What it Takes? Red Bull (ad, contest)
- Never – Drinking/driving Australia (psa, testimonial)
- Chew print – Grizzly (ad, sex appeal, manipulation)
- Cheetah – Sketchers (ad, manipulation)
- Ab Circle Pro – (ad, health appeal)
- Truth – Secrets of a Tobacco Executive (psa, reverse)
- Smoking Kid – Thailand (psa, reverse)
- Smoking vs. Chew (psa, statistics)
- Stoned Drivers are Killers – Weed and Driving (psa, testimonial, statistics)
- Old Milwaukee – Beer (ad, sex appeal)



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## Marketing Strategies – Student Worksheet

This list describes the most common strategies used for persuasion in advertising. Fill in the chart as you watch and discuss the ads/PSAs.

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Having Fun	People in the ad are having a really good time as part of the 'gang'. The hidden message: "Use the product and you'll have fun as well."	
Manipulation	The ad suggests manipulative, exaggerated or untruthful messages.	
Humour	The ad uses comedic characters, dialogue or pictures to promote the product.	
Contests, Special Promotions	The ad features a contest/special promotion in relation to a product (e.g., holiday to Florida, back stage passes to a music concert, C.D.'s in beer cases). Viewers may feel compelled to buy this product in order to win the contest or get their "free" promotional item.	
Statistics	The ad uses numbers to impress the consumer. These ads do not provide any information about the source of the statistics.	
Health Appeal	The ad suggests that the product can do wonders for the consumer's health. The ad uses expressions like "the best" and "the only" that are not substantiated.	
Reverse/Sarcasm	The ad leads you along one line of thinking, and then flips at the end.	



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Be aware of the power of the media! The goal of an advertiser is to creatively persuade a target market to buy a specific product.

## Definitions

**Advertising** is defined as any message with content controlled by an advertiser that is communicated to influence the choice, opinions or behaviors. Advertising messages are used to promote the use of goods and services, to improve the public image of corporations, organizations, and governments, or to advance a point of view.

**Advertisement or commercial** is a promotion of a product or service for monetary gain or profit through one of several forms of media.

A **Public Service Announcement (PSA)** is a not-for-profit advertisement typically on radio or television, designed to change public attitudes by raising awareness about specific issues.

**Media Literacy** is the ability to interpret the images we see in the media, and decide if it is propaganda (not all true) or factual. I.e. on TV, in print (magazines, newspapers), on billboards, on the radio, on the Internet, etc., these images shape our attitudes and choices. The only goal of the advertiser is to persuade a target market to do something...buy a specific product; go somewhere; vote a certain way. Companies advertise:

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## Homework Assignment:

Choose a current advertisement or PSA from any media source and answer the following questions:

1. Describe it. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Is this an Ad or PSA? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who is the target audience? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the message? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What marketing strategy is being used? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_







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